

JORGENSEN JOURNAL 2012

Addition to the Family! (No, Wait, It's Not What You Think...)

How many windows can you fit in a room? This was our dilemma as we contemplated an addition to the house, although ever since watching Downton Abbey we've taken to calling it "a Great Room."

The same contractor who originally built the house worked, oh, so patiently with us, as we explored various shapes and sizes. "That's pretty big," he reflected, when we floated the first draft of our dream space. We finally decided to move the bulkhead (well, he did the moving), so we could expand out the back, opening and broadening the kitchen area in the process. Oh, and Karen now has the pantry of her dreams! (Didn't we hint that this news item would be exciting?)

We've taken "open concept" to a whole new level, with the front porch window boxes of flowers visible from the very back of the expansion. When you start with a 20' x 30' original footprint for our side of the duplex, these considerations take on an unruly weight.

Yes, and Kamini doubled the size of her bedroom by cannibalizing Karen's office – removing a wall will do that. We even connected fencing right up to the small deck on the side, so even Stella in her dog run has an outdoor great room of her own. And, we get to stay inside whenever we let her out!

All in all, we couldn't be happier. Come see it sometime!

Journal Survives the Apocalypse

Yes, it seems we made it past the ending of the Mayan Long-Count Calendar. Since we were still here, it seemed a good time to revive the Jorgensen Journal. Another Mayan cycle of 144,000 Days has passed, so why not bring our friends and family up-to-date on our doings?

Some of you may have thought the Journal had folded, in this era of consolidations and cut-backs. But, no -- we were just awaiting the accumulation of enough newsworthy items! This is not to say our lives are filled with tedium, just that we don't have that same cub reporter enthusiasm for capturing things in print as they arise.

Mom Joins the Ancestors

The Great Feast at the End of Time has lined up some special assistance, as Karen's Mom, Inger Smith, passed from this life unto the next. We miss her, and had a grand celebration of her life last January, at the Anglican Church and afterwards at the Canadian Legion Hall in Philipsburg, Quebec.

Karen's Dad, Fred, at a remarkable 97 years young, continues completely clear in his head although "the legs don't work very good." Still, there's no stopping him, as he heads down to the lake front on his scooter most days, to check on the goings-on in town.

He's a great guy, who shows us all how to live in gratitude for every day he's got.

Back In The Pulpit Again

The Lutherans have made a stealth incursion into the Congregational Church. Karen now does occasional supply preaching at the local church in town where we usually attend.

The church has been very welcoming towards us, and very appreciative of Karen's Lutheran emphasis on God's risky and unconditional acceptance of us, despite our worst or even best efforts.

Besides, this allows Karen to slip in the occasional Psalm, from her favorite book of Scripture, into the order of service (we can't yet get them to call it "the liturgy.") Kamini seems to enjoy worshipping locally, with a chance to see both teachers and friends.

The church has become increasingly involved in outreach or service ventures. They now operate a New Life Thrift Store – is it appropriate to call a thrift store thriving? – where Kamini has volunteered on numerous occasions.

There is also a monthly supper open to anyone in the community, prepared by members of the World Service Committee. This allows Karen to keep trying out recipes for different soups and stews. Curried Lentil and Coconut Soup was a favorite a week ago, as was Butternut Squash and Apple Soup the month before.

All in all, food for both body and spirit!

JORGENSEN JOURNAL 2012

Stella Teaches Us The Basics

I think it was Martin Luther who said a dog is the best example of a Christian he had ever met! Where else can you see in action someone who is always faithful, always loving, always forgiving?

Our small white fluffy poodle, Stella, is certainly teaching us what is important in life –

- Every day is new.
- A little patience is good for the soul.
- There's always time to scratch.
- Don't forget to stay regular ('nuf said about that.)
- There's nothing better than simply chasing a ball! Soccer players, take note.

If that is not a description of daily mindfulness, I don't know what is. Good friends, good fun, good food. Who'd a' thunk that a little fur-foot could bring so much joy and delight?

Putting SPICE Back In Our Lives

After an interval of several years, we finally made a pilgrimage back to the SPICE Culture Camp, for families who have adopted from India. Some fifty families gather every year in western Pennsylvania, to share and support one another, and to celebrate aspects of this wonderful culture India, that has so touched our lives.

For us it proved both a chance to make new friends, and a reunion of sorts with folks whose paths we've crossed before.

Kamini invited her close friend, Lyndsay, along, and we were also able to bring another friend, Sanjukta, who lives in Maine, because her mother couldn't go this year.

This was the very time that the air conditioning went out on our car. So these three brave girls made the two-day sojourn in the back seat of our station wagon, with temperatures outside in the upper 90's and only small respite from open windows and sunroof. I guess sacrifice is historically part of any pilgrimage...

For those of you who have not seen it as yet, there is record of our trip to India, that we made two years ago in 2010. It is the log that Erling kept of the journey, interspersed with many of the photos that we took. It can be found at:

<http://travelpod.com/members/kindia2010> Enjoy!

From Roughin' It To Fluffin' It

Camping has had to make some adjustments in our lives. Karen and I started our outdoor career some thirty years ago with a two-person backpacking tent. That tent took us to the shores of Lake Superior, the far-flung beaches of Vancouver Island, and numerous trips back country into the Canadian Rockies.

It has been upgraded, or rather joined, over the years by a larger backpacking tent with mesh to look up at the stars at night. But sleeping on the ground remained part of the package.

This year, we decided to go to the sandy shores of Cape Cod. Sounds pretty gracious, right? Would our teenage daughter join in the spirit of said adventure?? Take a guess.

Kamini flatly refused to go unless we brought an air mattress. And not fully innocent ourselves, we had seen from a previous camping trip with friends the year before just how grand and spacious tents had become. I mean, these are the kind you can actually stand up in!

So we capitulated and borrowed their aforementioned "tenting abode" – not a two-person bivouac, mind you, but a two-room vaulted palace of a tent, not to mention the adjoining screened-in alcove on the front.

Moreover, Erling dutifully set up a gi-normous tarp, tying it to trees in several different directions, to keep any wayward raindrops off the picnic table and one of the backpacking tents, reduced now to the status of a nylon storage shed. Turns out, when you camp near the ocean, that is not a bad precaution.

Except, of course, that the palatial windows and roof of our regal dwelling did not fully keep out the torrential downpours that found us away from our sturdy home. So we were left to dodge the drips that aimed for our heads, and to mop up the floor with towels the next morning. Our hopes for further camping adventures with Kamini are severely diminished.

Here's wishing you strength and grace as you journey into the coming year. We would love to hear from you! May God bless and keep you.

Erling, Karen, Kamini, (& Stella!)
51 Cressey St., Henniker, NH 03242
(603) 428-8435 kmjorgensen2000@yahoo.com